



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **ICE ARRESTS FUGITIVE ALIEN WITH AK-47** *Man may have ties to white supremacy group*

**NEW YORK, N.Y.** – A fugitive criminal alien with an AK-47 assault weapon and possible ties to a white supremacy group has been arrested by the New York City Fugitive Operations Unit of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Sotirios Kanakis, 37, was arrested at his residence April 1. A security check of the residence by ICE Fugitive Operations officers found the AK-47 assault weapon in Kanakis' closet. The officers also found an eight-inch dagger and materials suggesting that Kanakis has some affiliation with a white supremacy group.

"A criminal alien with an assault weapon who abuses the freedoms and rejects the equality offered in America has no place in our society," said Raymond Simonse, Chief of ICE's New York Fugitive Operations Units. "Our city is safer with Kanakis behind bars, and we will remove him from this country as soon as his other legal issues are resolved."

Kanakis is a Greek citizen who entered the United States in 1969 as a legal permanent resident immigrant. He has multiple criminal convictions dating back to 1988 for crimes ranging from disorderly conduct and assault with a weapon to attempted criminal negligent homicide.

Because of his criminal convictions, Kanakis was placed in deportation proceedings in 1997. An immigration judge ordered him deported in 1999, but Kanakis appealed that decision and the matter remained before the immigration courts until October 2004, when the Board of Immigration Appeals affirmed the immigration judge's order that Kanakis be deported from the United States. Kanakis then failed to report for removal and became a fugitive.

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Kanakis, based upon the discovery of the AK-47, is currently in New York City Police custody. The ICE New York Fugitive Unit placed an immigration detainer on Kanakis with the New York Police Department and New York City Corrections. The detainer is a legal device that insures Kanakis will be returned to ICE custody for deportation after his pending criminal issues are resolved.

The ICE National Fugitive Operations Program (NFPO) targets individuals who have been ordered deported from the United States but failed to report for removal. From March 1 through Sept. 30, 2004, DRO apprehended 3,409 fugitives with final orders of removal, an increase of 112 percent over the same period in 2003. Fiscal year 2004 fugitive apprehensions totaled 11,063. ICE formally removed more than 160,000 aliens nationally in fiscal year 2004. More than half of those were criminal aliens.

ICE has two elite fugitive operations teams dedicated to the New York City area. Fugitive apprehensions in the metropolitan area have increased by two hundred percent in the first half of the 2005 Fiscal Year, which began October 1, 2004.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*